

Calendar No. 640

109TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 860

[Report No. 109–348]

To amend the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act to require State academic assessments of student achievement in United States history and civics, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 20, 2005

Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DODD, and Ms. LANDRIEU) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

SEPTEMBER 26, 2006

Reported by Mr. ENZI, with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

A BILL

To amend the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act to require State academic assessments of student achievement in United States history and civics, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “American History
3 Achievement Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds that—

6 (1) the 2001 National Assessment of Edu-
7 cational Progress assessment in United States his-
8 tory had the largest percentage of students scoring
9 below basic of any subject that was tested, including
10 mathematics, science, and reading;

11 (2) in the 2001 National Assessment of Edu-
12 cational Progress assessment in United States his-
13 tory—

14 (A) 33 percent of students in grade 4
15 scored below basic, 36 percent of students in
16 grade 8 scored below basic, and 57 percent of
17 students in grade 12 scored below basic;

18 (B) 92 percent of students in grade 12
19 could not explain the most important cause of
20 the Great Depression after reading a paragraph
21 delineating 4 significant reasons;

22 (C) 91 percent of students in grade 8
23 could not “list two issues that were important
24 in causing the Civil War” and “list the North-
25 ern and Southern positions on each of these
26 issues”;

1 (D) 95 percent of students in grade 4
2 could not list “two reasons why the people we
3 call ‘pioneers’ moved west across the United
4 States”;

5 (E) 73 percent of students in grade 4
6 could not identify the Constitution from among
7 4 choices as “the document that contains the
8 basic rules used to run the United States gov-
9 ernment”;

10 (F) 75 percent of students in grade 4
11 could not identify “the three parts of the fed-
12 eral (national) government of the United
13 States” out of 4 possible choices;

14 (G) 94 percent of students in grade 8
15 could not “give two reasons why it can be use-
16 ful for a country to have a constitution”; and

17 (H) 91 percent of students in grade 12
18 were unable to “explain two ways that demo-
19 cratic society benefits from citizens actively par-
20 ticipating in the political process”;

21 (I) America’s past encompasses great leaders
22 and great ideas that contribute to our shared herit-
23 age and to the principles of freedom, equality, jus-
24 tice, and opportunity for all;

1 (4) an appreciation for the defining events in
 2 our Nation’s history can be a catalyst for civic in-
 3 volvement; and

4 (5) the strength of American democracy and
 5 our standing in the world depend on ensuring that
 6 our children have a strong understanding of our Na-
 7 tion’s past.

8 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENT TO THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF**
 9 **EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AUTHORIZATION**
 10 **ACT.**

11 Section 303(b) of the National Assessment of Edu-
 12 cational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9622(b))
 13 is amended—

14 (1) in paragraph (2)(D), by inserting “(with a
 15 priority in conducting assessments in history not less
 16 frequently than once every 4 years)” after “subject
 17 matter”; and

18 (2) in paragraph (3)(A)—

19 (A) in clause (iii)—

20 (i) by inserting “except as provided in
 21 clause (iv),” before “may conduct”; and

22 (ii) by striking “and” after the semi-
 23 colon;

24 (B) by redesignating clause (iv) as clause
 25 (v); and

(C) by inserting after clause (iii) the following:

“(iv) shall conduct trial State academic assessments of student achievement in United States history in grades 8 and 12 in not less than 10 States representing geographically diverse regions of the United States and in civics in grades 8 and 12 in not less than 10 States representing geographically diverse regions of the United States (with a priority given to conducting assessments in United States history); and”.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD.

Section 302(e)(1) of the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9621(e)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (J) as subparagraph (K);

(3) in the flush matter at the end, by striking “subparagraph (J)” and inserting “subparagraph (K)”; and

1 (4) by inserting after subparagraph (I) the fol-
 2 lowing:

3 “(J) in consultation with the Commissioner
 4 for Education Statistics, identify and select the
 5 States that will participate in the trial State
 6 academic assessments described in section
 7 303(b)(3)(A)(iv); and”.

8 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

9 Section 305 of the National Assessment of Edu-
 10 cational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9624) is
 11 amended—

12 (1) by redesignating subsection (b) as sub-
 13 section (c); and

14 (2) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
 15 lowing:

16 “(b) HISTORY AND CIVICS ASSESSMENTS.—There
 17 are authorized to be appropriated—

18 “(1) \$7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2006
 19 and 2007 to carry out sections 303(b)(3)(A)(iv) and
 20 302(e)(1), of which not more than \$500,000 for
 21 each fiscal year shall be available to carry out sec-
 22 tion 302(e)(1); and

23 “(2) such sums as may be necessary to carry
 24 out such sections for each succeeding fiscal year.”.

1 **SEC. 6. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**

2 Section ~~113(a)(1)~~ of the Education Sciences Reform
 3 Act of 2002 (~~20 U.S.C. 9513(a)(1)~~) is amended by strik-
 4 ing “section 302(e)(1)(J)” and inserting “section
 5 302(e)(1)(K)”.

6 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

7 *This Act may be cited as the “American History*
 8 *Achievement Act”.*

9 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

10 *Congress finds that—*

11 *(1) the 2001 National Assessment of Educational*
 12 *Progress assessment in United States history had the*
 13 *largest percentage of students scoring below basic of*
 14 *any subject that was tested, including mathematics,*
 15 *science, and reading;*

16 *(2) in the 2001 National Assessment of Edu-*
 17 *cational Progress assessment in United States his-*
 18 *tory—*

19 *(A) 33 percent of students in grade 4 scored*
 20 *below basic, 36 percent of students in grade 8*
 21 *scored below basic, and 57 percent of students in*
 22 *grade 12 scored below basic;*

23 *(B) 92 percent of students in grade 12 could*
 24 *not explain the most important cause of the*
 25 *Great Depression after reading a paragraph de-*
 26 *lineating 4 significant reasons;*

1 (C) 91 percent of students in grade 8 could
 2 not “list two issues that were important in caus-
 3 ing the Civil War” and “list the Northern and
 4 Southern positions on each of these issues”;

5 (D) 95 percent of students in grade 4 could
 6 not list “two reasons why the people we call ‘pio-
 7 neers’ moved west across the United States”;

8 (E) 73 percent of students in grade 4 could
 9 not identify the Constitution from among 4
 10 choices as “the document that contains the basic
 11 rules used to run the United States government”;

12 (F) 75 percent of students in grade 4 could
 13 not identify “the three parts of the federal (na-
 14 tional) government of the United States” out of
 15 4 possible choices;

16 (G) 94 percent of students in grade 8 could
 17 not “give two reasons why it can be useful for
 18 a country to have a constitution”; and

19 (H) 91 percent of students in grade 12 were
 20 unable to “explain two ways that democratic so-
 21 ciety benefits from citizens actively participating
 22 in the political process”;

23 (3) America’s past encompasses great leaders
 24 and great ideas that contribute to our shared heritage

1 *and to the principles of freedom, equality, justice, and*
 2 *opportunity for all;*

3 *(4) an appreciation for the defining events in*
 4 *our Nation’s history can be a catalyst for civic in-*
 5 *volvement; and*

6 *(5) the strength of American democracy and our*
 7 *standing in the world depend on ensuring that our*
 8 *children have a strong understanding of our Nation’s*
 9 *past.*

10 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENT TO THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF**
 11 **EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AUTHORIZATION**
 12 **ACT.**

13 *Section 303(b) of the National Assessment of Edu-*
 14 *cational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9622(b)) is*
 15 *amended—*

16 *(1) in paragraph (2)(D), by inserting “(with a*
 17 *priority in conducting assessments in United States*
 18 *history not less frequently than once every 4 years)”*
 19 *after “subject matter”; and*

20 *(2) in paragraph (3)(A)—*

21 *(A) in clause (iii)—*

22 *(i) by inserting “except as provided in*
 23 *clause (iv),” before “may conduct”; and*

24 *(ii) by striking “and” after the semi-*
 25 *colon;*

1 (B) by redesignating clause (iv) as clause
2 (v); and

3 (C) by inserting after clause (iii) the fol-
4 lowing:

5 “(iv) shall conduct (in connection with
6 assessments in United States history and
7 civics scheduled pursuant to paragraph
8 (2)(D)) trial State academic assessments of
9 student achievement in United States his-
10 tory in grades 8 and 12 in not less than 10
11 States representing geographically diverse
12 regions of the United States and in civics in
13 grades 8 and 12 in not less than 10 States
14 representing geographically diverse regions
15 of the United States (with a priority given
16 to conducting assessments in United States
17 history); and”.

18 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD.**

19 Section 302(e)(1) of the National Assessment of Edu-
20 cational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9621(e)(1))
21 is amended—

22 (1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” after
23 the semicolon;

24 (2) by redesignating subparagraph (J) as sub-
25 paragraph (K);

1 (3) *in the flush matter at the end, by striking*
 2 *“subparagraph (J)” and inserting “subparagraph*
 3 *(K)”;* *and*

4 (4) *by inserting after subparagraph (I) the fol-*
 5 *lowing:*

6 *“(J) in consultation with the Commissioner*
 7 *for Education Statistics, identify and select the*
 8 *States that will participate in the trial State*
 9 *academic assessments described in section*
 10 *303(b)(3)(A)(iv); and”.*

11 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

12 *Section 305 of the National Assessment of Educational*
 13 *Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. 9624) is amended—*

14 (1) *by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection*
 15 *(c); and*

16 (2) *by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-*
 17 *lowing:*

18 “(b) *UNITED STATES HISTORY AND CIVICS ASSESS-*
 19 *MENTS.—*

20 “(1) *IN GENERAL.—In addition to amounts oth-*
 21 *erwise appropriated under subsection (a)(1)(2), there*
 22 *are authorized to be appropriated to carry out sec-*
 23 *tions 303(b)(3)(A)(iv) and 302(e)(1)—*

1 “(A) \$8,500,000 for the fiscal year pre-
 2 ceding the conduct of the first trial assessment
 3 described in section 303(b)(3)(A)(iv);

4 “(B) \$8,500,000 for the fiscal year during
 5 which the first trial assessment described in sec-
 6 tion 303(b)(3)(A)(iv) is conducted; and

7 “(C) such sums as may be necessary for
 8 each fiscal year succeeding the fiscal year de-
 9 scribed in subparagraph (B).

10 “(2) AMOUNTS FOR THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT
 11 GOVERNING BOARD.—From the amounts made avail-
 12 able under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph
 13 (1), not more than \$500,000 shall be available for
 14 each fiscal year to carry out section 302(e)(1).”.

15 **SEC. 6. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**

16 Section 113(a)(1) of the Education Sciences Reform
 17 Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9513(a)(1)) is amended by striking
 18 “section 302(e)(1)(J)” and inserting “section
 19 302(e)(1)(K)”.

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